



## City of Helena

Municipal Court  
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STATE OF MONTANA  
COUNTY CLERK  
FILED 3/25/13  
HB 233

February 5, 2013

Re: HB 233

Members of the Committee:

I am sorry I cannot be with you in person. We have several trial conflicts.

The Helena Municipal Court was one of the first to adopt and use the 24/7 testing program. We had the support of the Helena Police Department, the Sheriff's office and the staff of the Detention facility. I am a fan. We have expanded to the program to provide for daily testing for other offenses where alcohol was a factor. Experience shows it often is.

The program is not a cure-all for the issues we face. It has been a success in keeping offenders off alcohol for a period long enough for them to consider some constructive options. The 24/7 Sobriety Program provides an effective way to hold DUI offenders accountable. If they decide to drink, they very quickly find themselves looking at me again and spending jail time. The sobriety success rate for people being tested is very high... in excess of 99%. We have used both pretrial and post-conviction testing with notable success.

I support the concept of trying to help our defendants stay clean and sober as best we can. The results are sometimes remarkable. Folks come back in better health and with a better attitude about themselves.

The bill you have before you is an expansion of those concepts. I cannot estimate the effect drug testing will have nor the complexity of the process. We can only hope as judges to help some of the people we see. I hope you will consider providing tools to help us do that.

**Judge Bob Wood**  
**Helena Municipal Court**